

# **The Fund for New Citizens**

in The New York Community Trust

# Welcoming

the Newest New Yorkers

THE NEW YORK  
COMMUNITY TRUST





## Collaboration at Work

# Opportunity, freedom, hope, education, and jobs

draw immigrants from across the world to New York City, now more than ever before. But making a new life isn't easy.

For three decades the Fund for New Citizens has helped immigrants integrate into the City's civic and economic life. This overview of the Fund traces its beginnings and shows how its grants make a difference for millions of New Yorkers.

Among its achievements, the Fund has:

- **Provided more than \$20 million in grants** to increase legal services for immigrants, support immigrant-led advocacy organizations, and challenge anti-immigration policies.
- **Developed partnerships between immigration legal service providers and community organizations** that help thousands of immigrants understand immigration law and file for citizenship, permanent residency, and deferred action.
- **Established the Immigration Representation Project** to provide legal assistance for those facing deportation and helped create the New York Immigration Coalition to advocate for immigrants.
- **Provided resources and technical assistance** to build the capacity of more than 60 immigrant-led organizations that reflect the City's diversity.
- **Supported advocacy** of behalf of the City's immigrants on issues ranging from federal enforcement policies to the Dream Act.



## Opening Doors for the City's Immigrants

Generations of immigrants have made New York City their home. More than 3 million of the City's 8.4 million residents were born in another country.

Since its inception in 1987, the Fund for New Citizens has helped New York's immigrants understand and respond to complex immigration laws and policies. The Fund, a collaboration of foundations, was started in response to passage of the 1986 Immigration Control and Reform Act, the first, most comprehensive U.S. legislation to tackle the issue of unauthorized immigration. Under this legislation more than 100,000 immigrants living in New York were eligible to become citizens.

The Fund's initial goals were to stimulate and coordinate foundation giving on behalf of the City's immigrants. The first grants were made to community groups so they could provide information on legalization to their constituents.

Since then, the Fund has played a vital role in raising awareness of immigrant issues, encouraging foundations to consider the concerns of immigrants in their grant making.

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United Way of NYC  
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**\$20,595,000**

in grants given by the  
Fund for New Citizens

**60**

grassroots organizations  
received grant funding

**3.07** million

immigrants live in NYC

**1,800**

immigrants a year assisted with  
citizenship/residency filings

**33**

funders





## Providing Legal Help

Through the years, the Fund has helped immigrants get quality legal representation and a fair hearing when they seek to stay in this country. It has provided the tools for immigrant-led organizations to help its constituents as well. A few examples of how the Fund's grants have made a difference:

### Immigration Representation Project

**F**or individuals facing deportation, the consequences can be devastating—banishment, separation from family, loss of income, and possibly the risk of punishment, persecution or even death in their home country. The Immigration Representation Project (IRP) offers pro bono legal services to low-income immigrants facing deportation. The Fund for New Citizens provided grant support for this project since its inception in 1992.

The IRP is a collaborative among non-profit organizations: Catholic Charities, Human Rights First, Legal Aid Society, and, in its earliest inception, the Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society. Together they provide comprehensive screenings for immigrants in deportation proceedings and offer pro bono

legal representation to a number of those individuals. It is the longest-running screening project of its kind in the U.S.

Recognizing the IRP's value, space for the screenings is provided at the New York Immigration Court. Following the screenings, the legal teams evaluate the cases for representation.

One of the collaboration's strengths is that each participant brings expertise on different aspects of immigration cases, so the IRP can effectively serve a wide range and number of clients. For example, Catholic Charities handles a variety of cases that includes family based-immigration and filings for victims of domestic violence. Human Rights First matches staff immigration law experts with volunteer attorneys, who are mentored in each representation. Attorneys in Legal Aid Society's immigration law unit take on the cases of immigrants who are long-time per-

manent residents facing deportation because of criminal convictions.

An article in the *Fordham Law Review* commended the Fund for its support of the IRP: "The success of this collaborative can be directly attributed to the long-term commitment of The New York Community Trust."

**Since its start, the IRP** has provided high-quality legal representation to some 4,200 immigrants facing deportation and provided consultations to nearly 20,000 immigrants. The IRP also recruits, trains, and mentors law students and volunteer attorneys to represent immigrants in removal proceedings.



## Community-Based Legal Services

**I**mmigration law and policy can feel like a roller coaster for those whose lives are directly affected. The rapid pace and complexity of changes can create fear and confusion in immigrant communities. Lawyers can help. But the local community groups that the City's immigrants often turn to for information and advice rarely have adequate funding to hire lawyers. The Fund for New Citizens has filled this gap by pairing established legal service providers with immigrant-led community groups, particularly in the wake of significant changes that affected thousands of New Yorkers.

**Special Registration.** In late 2002, the Immigration and Naturalization Service announced a Special Call-In Registration Program for male immigrants from 25 predominantly Middle Eastern countries. Registration included a meeting with an immigration official, where the interviewees were fingerprinted (both digitally and with ink), photographed, and asked a series of questions under oath. The willful refusal to register was a criminal violation. Within weeks of the announcement, the Fund for New Citizens made grants to four legal service providers—City Bar Justice Center, Legal Aid Society, Asian American Legal Defense and Education Fund, and Lutheran Social Services—to work with the Council of Pakistan Organization and the Arab American Family Support Center to help New Yorkers cope with the impact of the program.

**Temporary Protected Status for Haitians.** In 2010, following a devastating earthquake in Haiti, the federal government granted Temporary Protected Status to Haitians who were in the United States at the time of the earthquake, allowing them to live and work in the U.S. for a limited period of time. The Fund again moved quickly to bring timely legal services into communities with grants to CAMBA, Catholic Charities, and CUNY School of Law as well as several Haitian groups, including Haitian Americans United for Progress and Haitian Women for Haitian Refugees. In two years, the Fund's grantees helped more than 2,200 Haitian New Yorkers apply for Temporary Protected Status.



**Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals.** President Obama announced Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals in 2012. Under DACA, some young, undocumented immigrants are able to live and work in the U.S. without fear of deportation for two years with the possibility of renewal. For those who qualify, DACA opens the door to new opportunities for education, employment, and health care. The Fund for New Citizens immediately started a grant program to help young immigrants understand and apply for DACA. Legal service providers, including New York Legal Assistance Group, Legal Aid Society, Catholic Charities, Brooklyn Defender Services and CAMBA, work alongside Make the Road New York,



Chinese Progressive Association, Adhikaar, African Services Committee, the Arab American Association of New York, DRUM (Desis Rising Up and Moving), the Northern Manhattan Coalition for Immigrant Rights, Asian Americans for Equality, and Queens Community House, to help young people understand and, where appropriate, apply. With these groups' support, thousands of young immigrant New Yorkers apply for and receive deferred action.



### Brooklyn-based grantee Atlas: DIY

built an interactive website where young people share information about immigration law and policy. Atlas also worked with Sunset High School to develop its Immigrant Youth Peer Educator Program. Students were trained about DACA and immigration laws and brought this knowledge to their school to inform their peers. The program continues in partnership with other local high schools and has educated more than 1,000 young people about their rights.

**Expanded DACA and Deferred Action for Parents of Americans.** In 2014, President Obama announced plans to expand DACA and create Deferred Action for Parents of Americans (DAPA), which would defer the deportation of thousands of undocumented immigrant New Yorkers who are parents of citizens or legal permanent residents. The program was stopped by a district court judge in Texas and in June of 2016, an eight-member U.S. Supreme Court could not reach a majority, allowing the lower court decisions to stand. The Fund for New Citizens supported two borough-based coalitions that are helping immigrants understand DACA and DAPA as well as the litigation. They also screen immigrants for other forms of immigration relief, including temporary protected status, asylum, and even citizenship. In Queens, lawyers from Queens Legal Services and Catholic Migration Services are working with Adhikaar, DRUM, Chhaya, and MinKwon Center for Community Action. In the Bronx, Legal Services NYC-Bronx is working with Sauti Yetu Center for African Women and Youth Ministries for Peace and Justice. Hispanic Federation and Northern Manhattan Coalition for Immigrant Rights worked together to reach the Latino population.



# Capacity Building Helps Organizations Grow and Thrive



Immigrant-led organizations are trusted, comfortable places to go for information and guidance and also a key path for integrating newcomers into New York's civic life.

But these organizations face tough challenges, including uncertain funding and limited organizational structure. Many depend on volunteers because they lack the resources to hire staff. In the face of their constituents' enormous needs, these organizations focus their energy on providing services rather than strengthening operations.

In 2003, the Fund for New Citizens began a capacity-building initiative to help immigrant-led groups address critical management and operational issues. With grants and management assistance, grantees strengthen their organizations and programs, gain management skills, boost fiscal responsibility and fund-raising capacity, and upgrade technology.

The rich, diverse fabric of nonprofits represents and supports the immigrant community and makes it stronger. In turn, the Fund's capacity building keeps immigrant-led organizations vibrant and active.

Among the grantees benefiting from capacity building:

- **African Communities Together** funded new systems to monitor member engagement and membership dues and hired two consultants with expertise in nonprofit membership development.
- **MinKwon Center for Community Action**, which organizes and advocates for Korean and other Asian Americans, developed human resources policies and procedures as its staff and organizational budget grew.
- **Damayan Migrant Workers Association**, which advocates for Filipino domestic workers, built a database to track and communicate with members and donors.
- **Desis Rising Up and Moving (DRUM)**, supporting South Asians, boosted its fund-raising by hiring a grant-writing consultant and recruiting new board members with fundraising ability.

**Strengthening immigrant-led organizations has measurable results.** Said one grantee: "The most helpful thing...was that they stood by us, not just monetarily, but with support and consultation hours.... For people like us who don't have this kind of money, that consulting advice is really important."



# Immigrant Organizations by Borough

## BRONX

African Communities Together  
Committee Against Anti-Asian Violence  
Domestic Workers United  
Garifuna Coalition USA  
MASA-MexEd  
Sauti Yetu Center for African Women  
VAMOS Unidos

## BROOKLYN

Arab American Association of New York  
Arab-American Family Support Center  
Atlas: DIY  
Brooklyn Congregations United  
Bushwick Housing Independence Project  
Council of Pakistan Organization  
Council of Peoples Organization  
Dwa Fanm  
Families for Freedom  
Flanbwayan Haitian Literacy Project  
Haitian Women for Haitian Refugees  
Latin American Workers Project  
La Union  
Mixteca  
United Chinese Association of Brooklyn

## MANHATTAN

American Sufi Muslim Association  
Chinese Progressive Association  
Chinese Staff and Workers' Association  
Damayan Migrant Workers Association  
Domestic Workers United  
Esperanza del Barrio  
Families for Freedom  
La Fuente, A Tri-State Worker & Community Fund  
Mexican Educational Foundation of New York  
Mirabal Sisters Cultural and Community Center  
Movement for Justice in El Barrio  
Nah We Yone  
National Coalition for Haitian Rights  
National Mobilization Against Sweatshops  
New York State Youth Leadership Council  
New York Taxi Workers Alliance  
Northern Manhattan Coalition for Immigrant Rights  
Sakhi for South Asian Women  
Sikh Coalition  
Street Vendor Project

## QUEENS

Adhikaar for Human Rights and Social Justice  
Brandworkers International  
Chhaya Community Development Corporation  
DRUM-Desis Rising Up and Moving  
Haitian Americans United for Progress  
Latin American Integration Center  
Liberty Center for Immigrants  
Minkwon Center for Community Action  
National Korean American Service & Education Consortium  
New Immigrant Community Empowerment  
Faith in New York  
RACCOON  
South Asian Council for Social Services  
South Asian Youth Action (SAYA)  
Turning Point for Women and Families  
Voces Latinas  
Women for Afghan Women  
Worker's Justice Project

## STATEN ISLAND

African Refuge  
El Centro de Hospitalidad  
Roza Promotions

## FIVE BOROUGHES

Coalition for Asian American Children and Families  
Council of Jewish Émigré Community Organizations  
Latin American Integration Center





# Looking to the Future

Since its founding nearly 30 years ago, the Fund for New Citizens has kept pace with issues affecting the City's immigrant communities. From the passage of the 1986 Immigration Reform and Control Act through the most recent attempt, through DACA and DAPA, to reform the federal immigration system, the Fund has supported legal services to help the City's immigrants understand and, when possible, benefit from these developments.

The immigration legal services landscape has changed, however. After advocacy by grantees of the Fund, the City is supporting the New York Immigrant Family Unity Project, which is providing a lawyer for every New York City immigrant who is detained while his or her deportation case is pending. The City Council has allocated several million dollars to provide legal help to unaccompanied immigrant children, and the Mayor's Office of Immigrant Affairs is leading Action NYC, a multimillion-dollar outreach and legal services effort. Private funding also has increased, with significant commitments from the Robin Hood Foundation through grants to legal service providers and the new Immigrant Justice Corps. After almost 30 years of work by the Fund for New Citizens, its grantees, and others, the City's immigrants are more likely to get the legal services they need to live, work, and succeed.

But given the tumultuous immigration policy environment—from the surge of unaccompanied minors from Central America to political rhetoric about comprehensive

immigration reform to threats to deport millions—the Fund's collective, nimble philanthropic support for the City's immigrants remains crucial. Rapid, complex change is a certainty. Immigrant-led community nonprofits are lynchpin sources of information, support, and advocacy for the City's diverse immigrant population. These nonprofits must react quickly when circumstances change, whether because of an unexpected but promising policy such as deferred action or the threat of a ban on Muslims. Capacity-building will remain a central focus of the Fund, building and improving the infrastructure of immigrant-led nonprofits on which the City's immigrants rely. And as it has for decades, the Fund will keep funders informed and make grants for advocacy, outreach, and, where appropriate, legal services, to respond quickly to the most pressing issues facing the City's immigrants.

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